Code of Conduct
Plain Language Summary 2018 / 2019

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Fundamental Rights of Students

Education in a free society demands that students be aware of their rights and learn to exercise them responsibly. To that end, students have a right to:

1. be provided with an education that is intellectually challenging and relevant to the demands of the 21st century;
2. be informed of all school rules;
3. be guided by a discipline policy which is fairly and consistently implemented.

Responsibilities of Students

Students attend school so that they may develop to their fullest potential. With this in mind, each student is expected to:

1. accept responsibility for his/her actions;
2. respect the rights of others, including his/her right to secure an education;
3. attend school on a regular and punctual basis;
4. complete class assignments and other school responsibilities by established deadlines;
5. show evidence of appropriate progress toward meeting course and/or diploma requirements;
6. respect school property and help to keep it free from damage;
7. obey school regulations and rules made by school authorities and by the student governing body;
8. recognize that teachers assume the role of a surrogate parent in matters of behavior and discipline when at school, as well as during any school-sponsored activities;
9. contribute toward establishing and maintaining an atmosphere that generates mutual respect and dignity for all;
10. become familiar with this Code and seek interpretation of parts not understood;
11. actively discourage inappropriate behavior of other students and report the incidents to the administration.

Essential Partners

Essential partners are stakeholders who have a collaborative responsibility for school safety and compliance with the Code of Conduct. They include parents, teachers, guidance counselors, building administrators, district administrators, and the Board of Education. All are expected to cooperate and contribute to a safe, orderly, respectful, tolerant, and effective educational environment in which all children can learn and grow.

The Westhampton Beach School District is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive, and District personnel may deliver, quality educational services without disruption or interference. Responsible behavior by students, teachers, other District personnel, parents, and visitors is essential to achieving this goal.

The Westhampton Beach School District has a longstanding set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty, and integrity.

The District recognizes the need to clearly define these expectations for acceptable conduct on school property, identify the possible consequences of unacceptable conduct, and to ensure that discipline, when necessary, is administered fairly and promptly. Unless otherwise indicated, this Code of Conduct applies to all students, school personnel, parents, and other visitors when on school property or attending a school function.

A copy of the complete Code of Conduct is available on the District's website and upon request in the main office of each school building.
Student Dress Code

The responsibility to come to school dressed appropriately rests with each student, his/her parents, the building administration, faculty, and staff. Students and parents have the right to determine school dress providing the attire complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not interfere with the educational process. Furthermore, it is expected that dress reflect current community standards and deportment. Head coverings, with the exception of head coverings for religious or medical purposes, are forbidden in the classroom. Clothing and attire which bear an expression or insignia which can be interpreted as obscene or libelous, which advocates racial or religious prejudice, is gang-related, or is disruptive, are forbidden. In addition, the school administration reserves the right to make determinations regarding appropriateness of attire on an individual basis.

Prohibited Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate and civil manner, with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, district personnel, and other members of the school community, and for the care of school facilities and equipment. The best discipline is self-imposed, and students must learn to accept responsibility for their own behavior and the consequences of their misbehavior. Students may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school, when they engage in conduct that is disorderly, insubordinate, disruptive, violent, or that endangers the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others. Examples of disciplinary infractions are outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engaging in Conduct that is Disorderly</th>
<th>Engaging in Conduct that is Disruptive</th>
<th>Engaging in Conduct that Endangers the Safety, Health, or Welfare of Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• running in hallways</td>
<td>• failing to comply with the reasonable directive of a teacher, administrator, or other school staff member</td>
<td>• engaging in conduct that creates a substantial risk of injury</td>
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<tr>
<td>• making unreasonable noise</td>
<td>• using profane or abusive language or gestures</td>
<td>• stealing or attempting to steal personal or school district property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• violating traffic or parking regulations</td>
<td>• engaging in any willful act that disrupts the normal operation of the school</td>
<td>• gambling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• engaging in any willful act that disrupts the normal operation of the school</td>
<td>• trespassing</td>
<td>• defaming, discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation, or hazing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• trespassing</td>
<td>• misuse of computers / electronic devices or violating the District's acceptable use policy</td>
<td>• possessing or selling obscene materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>• misusing of computers / electronic devices</td>
<td>• committing an act of violence upon a teacher, administrator, other school personnel, student, or any person lawfully on school property</td>
<td>• smoking or using or possessing e-cigarettes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engaging in Conduct that is Insubordinate</td>
<td>• possessing a weapon, displaying what appears to be a weapon, or threatening to use a weapon</td>
<td>• possessing, selling, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• failing to comply with the reasonable directive of a teacher, administrator, or other school staff member</td>
<td>• intentionally damaging or destroying personal or school district property</td>
<td>• inappropriately using or sharing prescription or over-the-counter drugs</td>
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<td>• lateness for, missing, or leaving school without permission</td>
<td>• engaging in any willful act that disrupts the normal operation of the school</td>
<td>• engaging in misconduct on a school bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• failing to attend an assigned detention</td>
<td>• Engaging in Academic Misconduct</td>
<td>• engaging in off-campus misconduct that interferes with, or can be reasonably be expected to substantially disrupt the educational process</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• plagiarism, cheating, altering records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The list of offenses above is not intended to be all-inclusive. Please see the full version of the Code of Conduct for more information.

Reporting Violations

All school community members are expected to promptly report violations of the Code of Conduct to a teacher, the building principal, or designee. A student who observes another student possessing a weapon, tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal substance on school property or at a school function must report this immediately, without exception. All other violations should be reported to a teacher or administrator as soon as possible.
Disciplinary Penalties and Procedures

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the infraction at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and impartial. Disciplinary action, when necessary, will be fair, firm, and consistent so as to be most effective in changing student behavior. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, school personnel authorized to impose disciplinary penalties will consider the following: the student’s age, the nature of the offense, the student’s prior discipline record, the effectiveness of other forms of discipline, and any extenuating circumstances. Any student who is determined to be a threat to the health and safety of students or staff may be removed from school pending the completion of the discipline process.

Students who are found to have violated the Code of Conduct may be subject to the following penalties:

- verbal warning
- written warning
- written notice to parent
- detention
- suspension from transportation
- suspension from athletics
- suspension from activities
- suspension of other privileges
- in-school suspension
- removal from classroom by teacher
- restitution for damages to property
- short-term suspension from school
- long-term suspension from school
- permanent suspension from school
- referral to law enforcement officials

Alternative Instruction

When a student of any age is removed from class by a teacher or a student of compulsory attendance age is suspended from school pursuant to New York State Education Law §3214, the District will take immediate steps to provide alternative means of instruction for the student.

Students with disabilities are guaranteed certain procedural protections when they become subjects of disciplinary action. The Westhampton Beach School District is committed to ensuring that the procedures followed in disciplining students with disabilities are consistent with the procedural safeguards required by applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is any act of physical force upon a student for the purpose of punishing that student. However, in situations where alternative procedures and methods that do not involve the use of physical force cannot reasonably be used, physical force may be used to:

- protect oneself, another student, teacher, or any person from physical injury
- protect the property of the school or others
- restrain or remove a student whose behavior interferes with the orderly exercise and performance of school district functions, powers, and duties, if the student has refused to refrain from further disruptive acts

Corporal punishment of any student by any District employee is strictly prohibited. The District will file all complaints about the use of corporal punishment with the Commissioner of Education in accordance with Commissioner’s Regulations.

Student Searches and Interviews

The Westhampton Beach School District is committed to ensuring a safe and orderly atmosphere on school property and at all school functions. To achieve this kind of environment, school officials may question a student about an alleged violation of the law or of the District Code of Conduct. Students are not entitled to any “Miranda-type” warning before being questioned by school officials, nor are school officials required to contact a student’s parents or guardians prior to questioning the student. However, school officials will tell all students why they are being questioned.

Authorized school officials may conduct searches of students and their belongings if reasonable suspicion exists that the search will result in evidence that the student violated the law or the District Code of Conduct. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to school lockers, desks, or other storage places. School officials may search these areas at any time and for any reason without prior notice or consent.
Visitors to Our Schools and Public Conduct on School Property

Parents and other community members are encouraged to visit our District's schools. Since schools are a place of work and learning, certain limits must be set. The Building Principal is responsible for all persons in the school building and sets the guidelines for visitors. All visitors must sign in and obtain a visitor's badge, which must be worn at all times while on school grounds.

All persons on school property are expected to model safe, lawful, respectful, and civil behavior as outlined in the full version of the Code of Conduct. Those in violation of the Code of Conduct will be asked to leave school premises and may be subject to action by law enforcement officials.

Dignity for All Students Act

The Dignity for All Students Act prohibits discrimination and harassment based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, and gender (including gender identity or expression) by school employees or students on school grounds or at school functions. Please see the full version of the Code of Conduct and Board of Education Policy #0115 (Student Harassment and Bullying Prevention and Intervention) for more information. Questions about the Dignity for All Students Act may be directed to the Building Principal or to Dr. Robert Finn, Dignity Act Coordinator.

Further Information

This document is a summary of the Westhampton Beach School District Code of Conduct. A copy of the complete Code of Conduct is available in the main office of each school building and may be downloaded from the District's website (www.whbschools.org).

Questions about the Code of Conduct and its enforcement may be directed to the Building Principal or the Superintendent of Schools.